

From: [DRAKE Doug](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: RE: PCB's in the Willamette and related health risks
Date: 02/06/2012 03:49 PM

Will,

Sounds good – Most of this falls under our Clean-up program work (not my area) and the lead agency is likely Oregon Health Authority for your statement idea, but others may be able to help with what you want. At the very I can set you up with the right people when you get back to town.

doug

From: (b) (6) (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:13 PM
To: DRAKE Doug
Subject: RE: PCB's in the Willamette and related health risks

Hi Doug!

Great to know I have a new friend at DEQ - I look forward to meeting you.

I imagine you are familiar (and may have had a hand) in the 2009 Willamette Preliminary Sediment Evaluation. We were really hoping to take out at TBF at what we have been calling "Hawthorne Cove" around milemark 13.1

I understand the Remedial Investigation has been released - I have not had a chance to see it myself yet.

Prelim Sed Eval 2009

www.deq.state.or.us/lq/cu/nwr/Willamette/WillametteRiverSedimentEvaluation.pdf

In understanding PCB's my goal is to possibly get a statement from a few big agencies such as EPA, DEQ, BES talking about the human health risks of PCB's so that we can post them to the Big Float website so that people can properly vet this issue for themselves - it is a kind of heady issue to swim in an area with a known cancer causing substance.

Further I would love to do some more targeted sediment testing on the beach area of Hawthorne Cove such as the beach and lower depths where people may wade. I would also love to understand how PCB'S move - do they typically settle to the lowest point of the river? It also seems like the biggest concentration would be around the sewer outfall south of the bridge.

(b) (6)

I would love to hook up - maybe we can walk the Hawthorne Cove site together?

Thanks for your prompt reply to my note - the PCB issue and the referenced report was brought to my attention the day before we left - it has been weighing on my mind - I do see this as an opportunity to educate the public on PCB's - the next big milestone for restoration of the Willamette is eating all fish that swim in the river - I personally don't want that lost in the explanation of how PCB's effect humans.

Cheers,

Will

From: DRAKE.Doug@deq.state.or.us
To: (b) (6)
Subject: RE: PCB's in the Willamette and related health risks
Date: Mon, 6 Feb 2012 18:29:34 +0000

Will,

There is no risk to swimmers from exposure to PCBs or any other industrial contaminants (heavy metals, mercury, etc.). You are right that my fact sheet is not mentioned, that is because the only real potential risk to swimmers is bacteria and we chose to not even raise the issue. And the last few years of data has shown that that bacteria is only a potential problem following big rainfall events.

For more information about the PCBs and other fish contaminants check out this link to our Portland Harbor Clean-up program - there is a lot of good info here:

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/cu/nwr/PortlandHarbor/index.htm> In particular I would check out the Portland Harbor Fish Advisory link that the Oregon Health Authority has put together.

BTW – (b) (6) and really enjoyed it & looking forward to this year!

Cheers,
Doug Drake
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Northwest Region Water Quality
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503-229-5350



Think Green - Not every email needs to be printed

From: (b) (6) (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 1:32 PM
To: DRAKE Doug
Subject: PCB's in the Willamette and related health risks

Greetings Doug,

My preference would have been to give you a call but (b) (6)

(b) (6) I organize an event called The Big Float in the summer where we organize a group of people to float across the Willamette in downtown Portland. First year we had 1,300 people participate - it really speaks to people wanting to reclaim the Willamette as a recreational resource.

A question has come up recently about PCB's related to the health of the Willamette for humans for swimming. I have heard conflicting opinions regarding PCB's at the moment my conclusion is that the scientific conclusion is that PCB's are only hazardous to human health if engested orally in large quantities. The most typical threat is consumption of fish who have eaten PCB sediment which builds cummulatively in their fatty tissue, and even in that case it sounds like a fair amount of bad tainted fish would need to be consumed.

Please understand I do not mean to downplay the serious risks to humans through consumption or the serious risk to resident fish, I just want to be clear that it is ok to swim in the Willamette in areas where PCB's are present, becuae there are many areas on the Willamette that have PCB consontrations.

I have been referencing the document (link below) to help assure the public that the Willamette is safe for swimming. I noticed PCB's are not addressed on this document.

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/pubs/factsheets/willamette/09NWR003.pdf>

I am going to continue to do my own personal research to learn more about PCB's and I am hoping to help educate the public through The Big Float what PCB's are, why it is important to remove them, and communicate health risks properly.

Best regards,

(b) (6)